

קִינָה עַל חֶרֶבֶן הָאֲחֵרִיךְ

Lamentation on the Holocaust

שמעון בה"ר ייחודה



*He, who remembers those
who were mindful of Him,
Each generation and its saintly martyrs —
since the time Thou has chosen us —
May He remember the gruesome fate
of the last generation.*

*Woe! What has happened to us!
All those who were swept away
by the bloody flood —
All those who sacrificed their lives —
all who drowned in the valley of tears,
May G-d think of them in the lands of Eternal Life.
Forever may their memory be a blessing.*

*Lift your hands up to Him, woe O ye Heavens!
woe over the best of Israel's tribes,
Communities and congregations, towns and districts,
fraternities, foundations and all the houses of worship.*



הַזִּכָּר מִזְכִּירָיו, דּוֹר דּוֹר וְקִדּוּשָׁיו,

מַעַת אֲשֶׁר אָז בְּחֶרְתָּנוּ,

יִזְכּוֹר דְּרֹאוֹן, שֶׁל דּוֹר אַחֲרוֹן,

אוֹיֵה מָה הָיָה לָנוּ ...

שְׁטוּפֵי מְבוֹל־דָּם, שֶׁמָּכְרוּ נַפְשׁוֹתָם,

כָּל שְׁקוּעֵי עֲמֻקֵּי־הַבְּכָא,

יִפְקְדֵם אֱלֹהִים, בְּאַרְצוֹת הַחַיִּים,

וְעַדִּי עַד זִכָּרָם לְבִרְכָּה.

שָׂאוּ אֲלֵיוָם בְּפִים, אָהָה, אֵי שָׁמַיִם,

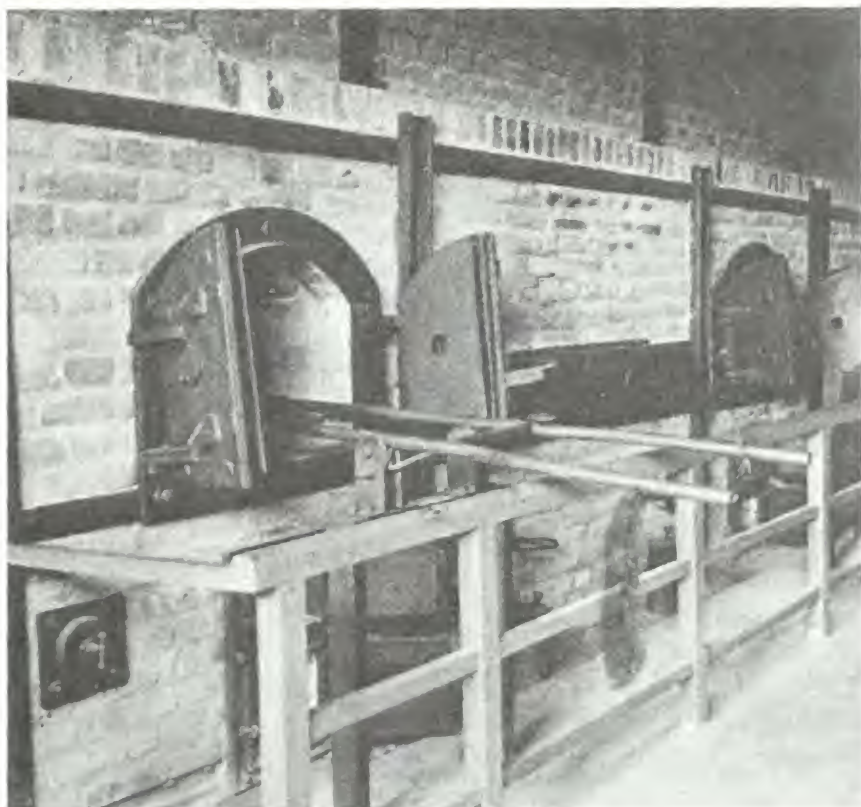
הוּא עַל מִיטֵב שְׁבִט־יִשְׂרָאֵל,

עֲדוֹת וְקִהְלוֹת, עָרִים וְגִלְלוֹת,

חֲבוּרוֹת, מוֹסְדוֹת, כָּל מוֹעֲדֵי אֶל,



*I wished streams of water would pour out of my eyes
towards the waterfalls of the rivers of tears—
For the millions of cremated corpses,
consumed in the fires of destruction and horror.
For the princes of Torah, the pillars of Tradition,
for the young flowers of priestly children,
For the diligent scholars, the teachers of men and women,
and the precious youth attending schools,
The pious daughters, the old grandparents
and their offspring, the little infants just born—
Everyone — thousand upon thousands,
beloved in life, whom death did not part.*



מי יתן פלגי מים, תרדנה עינים,
אל אשדות נחלי הדמעות,
עלי אלפי אלפים גופים נשרפים,
במוֹאש החרבן וזנועות.

ועל שרי־התורה, ומחזיקי מסורה,
ועל פרחי הבהונה הצעירים,
ועל חובשי מדרשות, ומורים ומורות,
תינוקות בית־רבן יקירים,
על בנות בוטחות. וסבים וסבות,
ועל זרעם וטפם שילדו,
וגם, לרבנות, ורבנות נאהבים בחיים,
במותם לא נפרדו.



Search for their blood!

*Take account of every driven leaf —
Of every life perished in the days of the holocaust —
a total of six million dead.*

*Struck by lightning from the furious storm
which devastated one full third
of the cherished vineyards Thou didst so dearly love.*

*O Avenger of blood! Pray, do not erase
the remembrance of their misery
from the book which Thou hast written.*

*Remember every moan, every horrifying scream,
when they were herded for slaughter —
All the rivers of blood, all the tear-stained faces:
they must never be forgotten.*



אֶת דָּמָם דָּרוּשׁ, כִּי תִשָּׂא אֶת רֹאשׁ,
 שֶׁל כָּל נֶדֶף לְעָלִים הַטְּרוּפִים,
 כָּל נַפְשׁוֹת־מֵת, בִּימֵי שָׁבֶר וְשֹׂאת,
 שֹׁשֶׁה אֶלְפֵי פְעָמִים אֶלְפִים,
 שְׁלִישִׁיהָ לְבָעֵר, בְּבָרֵק זַעַם סוּעַר,
 מִכְרָמֵי הַחֲמָד אֶהְבֶּת,
 גּוֹאֵל הַדָּם, נָא זָכֹר צַעְרָם,
 אֶל תִּמְחָה מִסֶּפֶר כְּתִבָּת.
 זְכוּר הַנְּאֻקוֹת, וְרַעַשׁ צַעְקוֹת,
 אֲזִי יוֹבְלוֹ לְרֹצַח,
 יֹאזְרִי דְמִיָּהֶם, וְדַמְעוֹת פְּנִיָּהֶם,
 לֹא תִשְׁכַּחנָּה לְנִצָּח,



*Every horror, every sigh, every piercing cry
from those torn asunder by hordes of dogs —
Remember them, count them,
bind them into Thy bundle,
Till the day of Thy vengeance comes—
to avenge their utter degradation.*

*In the barbarian's camp: pain, sickness,
the anguish of mortified souls,
Insults and scoffing, shame and spit —
searing wounds from merciless beatings —
Hunger, thirst, insanity, torture —
stumbling of the faint whose strength was gone.*

*Every death-rattle of every single one,
perishing in agony —
O, far be it from Thee,
that this ever be forgotten:*



כל חיל וגניחה, ונהי צריחה,
 משדודי להקות הכלבים,
 זכור וספור, בנאדך צרור,
 עד עת נקם עלבון עלובים.

במחנות הפראים, באב ונגעים,
 ופחי נפשות עגומות,
 חרפות וצחוק, בלימות ורוק,
 פצעי הבאות אימות,
 ורעבון, צמאון, שגעון, עצבון,
 וכשלוך נחשלים בלי-כח,
 וכל נאקות-חלל, מכל יחיד אמלל,
 חלילה לך מלשכח.



*The smokestacks —
heavy smokes from the furnaces,
Piles and piles of bones and limbs —
halls of poison,
The roaring noise from the multitude,
suffocating in the gas chambers —
The stench of the bodies — the emaciated corpses —
fertilizers for the soil of the frivolous;
And how the tormentors turned
human fat into soap
And their skin into decorations
for their womenfolk.
(Remember) those savage leaders
pointing their fingers —
To the right: slave labor! —
to the left: the shadows of death!
(Remember) when the sharpshooter's shots
felled the diggers, digging their own graves—
to be buried still writhing in agony.*



וּתִימְרוֹת-עֶשֶׂן וְקִיטוֹר מִכֶּבֶשׁ,
 תְּלִי-תֵלִים עֲצֻמוֹת וְגִידִים,
 וְחֹדְרֵי הָרֶעַל, קוֹל שְׁאָגוֹת
 מִקַּהֲל־הַנַּחֲנָקִים תּוֹךְ תְּאֵי הָאֲדִים,
 וְסֶרְחוֹן גּוֹפּוֹת, וְגוֹיּוֹת סְגוּפּוֹת,
 גִּלְגֵּל־דָּמֶן אֲדָמַת נוֹאֲצִים,
 אֵיךְ הִפְכוּ, טוֹרְפֵיהֶם, לְבֵרִית חֲלָבִיהֶם,
 וְעוֹר-אִישׁ לְקִשּׁוּטֵי הַנָּשִׁים.

וְקָרִיצַת אֶצְבָּעוֹת, שֶׁל רָאשֵׁי-הַפְּרָעוֹת,
 לִימִין שַׁעְבוֹד-פֶּרֶךְ, צִלְמוֹת לְשִׁמְאוֹל,
 וְאֵיךְ יָרוּ יָרִיוֹת עַל חוֹפְרֵי הַבּוֹרוֹת,
 בְּיִסּוּרֵי חֲבוּט־קֶבֶר הוֹרְדוֹם שְׁאוֹל,



*And — how they raped our sisters —
mutilated our daughters —
And poisoned medicine
from cruel doctors.
And the fugitives! In holes and hide-outs —
and their children abandoned in idolatrous homes.
Sheep without blemish —
the blood of our captive children,
Offered upon the mighty altar;
woe! It was Thy loving servant's lifeless flesh;
Who could count the saintly flock?
May their fire never go out,
For they stood Thy test—
they were Sanctifiers of Thy Name.
They, who with the cry of "Sh'ma Yisroel!"
gave up their lives for God,
so that He may gather them in.
Until the very last believing in His justice,
singing aloud the song of faith "Anee Maamin"*



אֵיךְ עָנּוּ אַחִיוֹתֵינוּ, וְסָרְסוּ בְּנוֹתֵינוּ,
 בּוֹסוֹת-תַּרְעֵלָה מִיְּדֵי רוֹפְאִים אֲכֹזְרִים,
 וּפְלִיטֵי הַשְּׂרִידִים בְּמַחֲלוֹת וּסְתָרִים,
 וְטַמְיוֹן יִלְדִים בְּבֵתִי שְׂמֵד-כְּמָרִים.

שֶׁה־תָּמִים לְעוֹלָה, דָּם בְּנֵי הַגּוֹלָה,
 הוּא אֲרִיאֵל מִנְּבִלַת חֲסִידֶיהָ
 צֶאֱן-קִדְשִׁים מִי יִמְנָה, אֲשֶׁר אֲשֶׁם לֹא תִכְבֶּה,
 בַּחוּנִיךָ הָיוּ מְקַדְשֵׁי שְׁמֶךָ,
 בְּקוֹל שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל מָסְרוּ נַפְשׁ לֹא-ל,
 שֶׁהוּא יֶאֱסָפָם, וְעַד יוֹם אַחֲרוֹן
 הַצְּדִיקוֹ דִּין, וְאֵף אֲנִי מֵאֲמִין עָנּוּ,
 וְשָׂרוּ שִׁירַת בְּטַחֲוֹן.



*What is left now: a people, bewildered like orphans —
no graves to pray at —
No tombstones to weep at
the tears of our sacred hearts.
Their sacrificial blood is their memorial —
the blood which will forever be boiling,
Which will never be forgotten;
and the mountains of ashes from their "Akeidah,"
Yea, all the ash-piles at the altars
shall be their lasting tribute.
Who could express Yisroel's torment,
its mind disturbed by misery —
What's left of its shine reduced to tiny bits —
its greatness sorely crushed today
O living God! o' Merciful One!
Comfort Thy congregation
which yearns so much for Thee.
Cause a new light to shine forth,
let rays of glory glow.
And may God's sacred spirit
once more rest upon us.*



וּבְכֵן נִשְׁאַר עִם, כִּיתוֹם נִרְהָם,
 בְּלִי קִבְרִים לְהִשְׁתַּטֵּחַ,
 וְלֹא מַצְבוֹת, אִיפֹה לְבָכוֹת,
 יִבְבוֹת לִבָּב רוֹתַח,
 רַק נִסְכֵּי-הַדָּם, אֲזָכְרוֹתֶם,
 תּוֹסָסִים בְּלִי שׁוֹכֵחַ,
 וְהָרִי אֶפְרִי עֶקְדָתֶם,
 תְּרוֹמוֹת דְּשָׁנִי מִזְבֵּחַ.

מִי יִמְלֹל, צַעַר יִשְׂרָאֵל,
 אֲשֶׁר וַעֲתוֹ מִכָּאֵב נִטְרַפֶּת,
 וּשְׁאֵרִית הַפֶּאֶר, כִּמְעֹט מִזְעִיר,
 וְאִיךְ קוֹמְתָה הַיּוֹם נִכְפָּפֶת,
 אֶל-חַי מִרְחָם, עֲדַתְךָ נַחֵם,
 אֲשֶׁר לָךְ מְאֹד נִכְסָפֶת,
 אֹרֶחַדְשׁ תַּזְרִיחַ, קִרְנֵי-הוֹד תַּצְמִיחַ,
 וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מִרְחָפֶת.



The Unconquerable Spirit

*Vignettes of
The Jewish Religious Spirit
The Nazis Could Not Destroy*

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Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	xi
<i>Foreword</i>	xii
Leaders of Their People	
<i>The Partisan Rebbe</i>	19
<i>Heroes of the Spirit</i>	23
<i>The Nazi Purim Party</i>	29
The Dignity of Martyrdom	
<i>The Proper Way to Die</i>	41
<i>The Final Sacrifice</i>	44
<i>Sabbath at the Edge of the Grave</i>	49
<i>Melaveh Malkah at Auschwitz</i>	52
<i>The Last Songs of Praise</i>	54
<i>The Last Escape</i>	56
<i>"We Need His Kind"</i>	58
<i>The Children Speak</i>	63
How They Kept the Law of God	
<i>The Torah in the Ghetto</i>	67
<i>He Stood Firm: Rabbi Samuel David Ungar of Nitra</i>	73
<i>The Last Seder of R. Menahem Zemba</i>	77
<i>Samson the Mighty</i>	92
<i>Days of Awe in Camps and Ghettos</i>	97
<i>Yom Kippur in Czestochowa — 1942</i>	100
<i>A Rosh HaShanah Sermon</i>	101
Study as a Way of Survival	
<i>Study as a Life Preserver</i>	107
<i>The Nazis and the Scholars</i>	111
<i>A Yeshiva Goes into Hiding</i>	113
<i>Study as a Weapon</i>	117
<i>The Bunker of the Hasidim</i>	119
<i>The Underground Yeshiva</i>	126
At the End	
<i>A Sage is Better than a Prophet</i>	131
<i>The Perfect Memorial</i>	133
Epilogue	137
A Lamentation on the Holocaust	143

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